

rities are sanctioning its use generally; in fact, resident architects and others are specifically ordering the hard wearing portions of various buildings to be executed therein. I find the invention now rests in Mr. Hutchison, who is carrying out the process in that town. On subsequent inquiries I find the invention renders the stone non-absorbent, throwing off all discolouring matter, with freedom from vegetation. In my humble judgment, an article more suitable to the requirements inferred from your remarks cannot be found, and from its low price it is well deserving encouragement. R. F.

#### POLYGONAL CHAPEL. CHURCH OF ST. MARY, WOOTON-UNDER-EDGE.

THERE is a chapel in the church of St. Mary, Wooton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire, the arrangement of which is rare for English architecture, namely, that of a polygonal apse (five sides of an octagon), set on the north wall of the nave, about half way down, and looking north. The sides by which this chapel is formed are remarkable for their extreme irregularity, as seen in the following dimensions:—the west wall, 10 feet 3 inches; north-west wall, 8 feet 4 inches; north wall, 5 feet 7 inches; north-east wall, 8 feet 10 inches; east wall, 10 feet 2 inches: each wall being 2 feet 4 inches in thickness. The N.W., N., and N.E. walls have windows of similar form and character, which are filled with singular though not very elegant tracery: they, nevertheless, are effective, and lend character to the building. There is a piscina in the wall which divides this chapel from the nave, close to the east wall; there is also a plain doorway in the west wall.

The roof is conical, reminding the observer of the form of roof prevalent among small buildings of the Early English style, though the general details of this chapel fix the period as the Decorated.

This chapel was formerly used as a vestry, but is now approached through an ancient arch, which has recently been opened by the ascent of a flight of steps, and is now used as a baptistery. There are other points in this interesting church well worthy of note, namely, two fine brasses in a very perfect state; some good incised grave crosses; two ambries; also some good Early English work in the arches and piers; a tower of fine detail and proportions of the Decorated period, the window and door of which (both very good specimens) are surmounted by labels studded with ball flower. The windows and other details of the church generally are perpendicular.

W. H. L.

#### PROPOSED PROVIDENT AND BENEVOLENT SOCIETY FOR BUILDING ARTIFICERS.

IN an article which appeared in THE BUILDER of the 15th inst. on the subject of the proposed Provident and Benevolent Society for Building Artificers, it was stated of the Servants' Provident Society, that while "during sixteen years since the passing of the Deferred Annuity Act, 941 persons only have availed themselves throughout the kingdom of the benefits of the Act, this society, during the short period of fourteen months, has added 103, or one-tenth of the whole, and since then has increased that number."

I hope you will allow me, as secretary to the Servants' Provident and Benevolent Society, to inform you, and your readers who may be interested in the subject proposed by Professor Cockerell, and advocated in your journal, that the success of the Servants' Society, which is held out as an encouragement to those who may be disposed to join the Builders' Society, has not only continued, but been largely increased, since the period referred to, viz., May 16th, 1849, when his Royal Highness Prince Albert condescended, as chairman of the public meeting in the Hanover-square Rooms, to explain the benefits which the Government annuity system offers to servants and the working-classes in general.

Up to May, 1849, 103 servants had contracted, through this society, for Government annuities, amounting to 1,659*l.*; and had paid towards the same 1,121*l.* 12*s.* 10*d.*; whereas,

from May to the present time, 199 servants have contracted, through this society, for Government annuities, amounting to 3,429*l.* 10*s.*; and have paid for the same, 4,283*l.* 4*s.* 1*d.*; making in the whole, for eighteen months, 302 servants who have contracted for Government annuities, amounting to 5,087*l.* 10*s.*; and have paid for the same to the Government, through this society, no less a sum than 5,475*l.* 16*s.* 11*d.*

I trust that this statement may afford some encouragement to Professor Cockerell, and others, whether architects, builders, or artificers, who may feel disposed to co-operate with that gentleman and yourself to ensure the success of his laudable design.

It may be interesting to you to know that since the appearance of the article in THE BUILDER, many persons connected with building have applied at this office for tables and general information respecting the subject of Government annuities and the working of our system. GEORGE GRANT, Secretary.

#### PROCEEDINGS OF THE METROPOLITAN COMMISSION OF SEWERS.

WE wasted one hour and a half this (Thursday) morning in listening to objections and explanations and angry recriminations, all wholly unnecessary under proper arrangement, in the Court of the Commissioners of Sewers; and considering that there were fifteen officers of the commission whose hours are paid for by the rate-payers, sitting all this time at the back of the room in case they might be wanted (to say nothing of eight reporters for the press), the public are somewhat interested in a knowledge of the fact, and an alteration in the state of things. Mr. Leslie was unyielding; objected to everything; obstructed everything; and yet we cannot condemn his proceedings, however disagreeable and ill matured they appeared, for the course seemed really to a great extent forced upon him, and the blame must rest with those who make the objections necessary. We give our usual report below. Our object in this preface is again to express our regret at the undignified position in which the commission and its officers stand before the public, and to call for immediate alteration. A very short time ago we showed the state of antagonism between the chief surveyor and the consulting engineer, and the smart things they said of each other. Now we have the latter and the assistant surveyor abusing one another, and endeavouring to show that each is quite unfit for his office. Let them take care lest they all prove their case in the eyes of the public. Mr. Gotto advises a plan of drainage for the luckless Westminster Improvements Commission. Mr. Austin feels it his duty, unasked, to report upon it as a work entirely "at variance with what is correct," "on erroneous principles," "absurd and impracticable;" it is a "faulty work," "a useless work;" and he then gives his own views.

Mr. Gotto replies, in a report printed, but not yet before the court, that—"Either I (Gotto) am incompetent for the office of your assistant surveyor, or Mr. Austin is incompetent to the duties of the consulting engineer to the commission," and asserts point blank that Mr. Austin's own propositions "form one mass of engineering blunders." We cautioned some of the officers of the court, when they were attacking people out of doors, against this slashing style of writing, but advice has been thrown away. They all write with too much facility; and then, as everything is printed (and a pretty bill there must be for this), the temptation to be smart is too much for their prudence.

Seriously, we invite Lord Carlisle to look into the matter, and put affairs on a better footing, or, as a matter of course, the first step taken when Parliament meets will be a Committee of Inquiry; and more printing, more delay, more waste of money.

A general court was held on Thursday, in Greek-street; Sir J. Burgoyne, in the chair.

The Cholera in Bagnal Green.—A letter was received from Mr. Baker, one of the coroners for Middlesex, setting forth that at the request of a jury of an inquest on John Papel, of Alfred-street,

Bethnal-green, he wished to call the attention of the commissioners to the entire want of drainage in that locality, and that no less than 400 fatal cases of cholera had occurred in that parish. Referred to surveyor.

On the motion of Mr. L. Jones, the following resolution was agreed to:—"That a separate account be kept of the whole of the expenses incurred in any district where there has not been any rate made for such district, including the salaries of the officers employed in such respective districts, in order that such expenses may be charged to such district."

New Plan for the Drainage of Westminster.—On the following recommendation of the Works Committee being read—"That the plan proposed by the consulting engineer (Mr. Austin), for the sub-soil drainage of Westminster be sanctioned, and that permission be given to the Westminster Improvement Commissioners to carry out the works suggested at their own expense,"

Mr. Leslie having called for the minutes of the last court on this question, went on to observe that, at that court it was ordered that the plan of Mr. Gotto, with Mr. Austin's counter plan, should be printed, and sent round for the consideration of the Commissioners. But what were they now called upon to discuss? Why, a new project that had never been referred to the Works Committee at all, or that had been ordered to be printed. They were, in fact, called upon to adopt some new project, which was admitted to be incomplete, and was really no plan at all, and the court knew nothing about it.

Mr. Banfield believed the committee was the proper place to discuss the question. All that rested with the court was, to consider whether they ought to adopt the recommendations or not.—Mr. Leslie replied that this was one of the most extraordinary proceedings he had ever seen in the conduct of public business, two papers having been sent to the Works Committee, to consider which should be determined upon. Instead of which they proposed a third, of which the court had never heard, still less referred to them.

Mr. Jones concurred in this view, and thought that the plan of Mr. Austin, if plan there were, should be printed and sent round to the commissioners for consideration. He, however, had no wish to throw cold water on what had been done by the committee, or to consider how far Mr. Austin had trod closely on the heels of Mr. Gotto, as he heard was now the case, but still he was of opinion that the question should be postponed for further consideration.

Mr. Austin said his new work was partly of an experimental character, and he believed it would be calculated to benefit the whole district, rather than the line of the proposed street.—Mr. Leslie wished to ask Mr. Austin whether he had not thrown over the whole of his original plan, and had adopted almost in entire the plan of Mr. Gotto.—This Mr. Austin altogether denied.—Mr. Leslie said further, he was quite ready to prove that Mr. Austin could not carry into effect either of his plans.

It was urged by several commissioners that the question should be adjourned; and the matter was finally terminated by the adoption of the following resolution, on the motion of Mr. R. L. Jones:—"That the recommendation of the Works Committee upon the report of Mr. Austin, and the report of Mr. Austin containing his plan upon the new sewer in Westminster, and all communications with reference to that report and the original report of Mr. Gotto, be printed, and copies sent to each commissioner, and that further consideration be adjourned."

After the above motion was carried, a very sharp, recriminatory conversation was carried on, Mr. Leslie contending that Mr. Austin had placed the court in a position of the greatest difficulty. Mr. Austin called upon the Chairman, while he was their consulting engineer, to protect him from what he considered unfair attacks; and Mr. Banfield, designating the manner in which business was carried on as disgraceful to the court, and unworthy even of a bear-garden, was anxious to move an adjournment.

The Drainage of the Potteries, Kensington.—The next matter was to consider Messrs. Austin, Lovick, and Cressy's report on the drainage of the Potteries, of Kensington, presented to the court at its last meeting. After some questions as to the power of the court to call upon the owners of the property to do the works required, the report was agreed to.

The Sewage Manure Committee.—Mr. Leslie then said that the objections urged to his proceeding with the subject of the Trial Works Committee could not apply to the Sewage Manure Committee, as a report from it had been issued upwards of six months. He then went on to state that the expenses incurred by the Sewage Manure Committee did not warrant its continuance. For instance, the sum spent on seven acres amounted to more than the fee-simple of the land. They had spent an enormous amount, and all they were likely to receive in return was 1*s.* from Colonel Clitheroe, of Boston House, Hanwell. They needed no new experiments on the subject of sewage manure, which had been fully treated upon in the able report of Mr. Chadwick, known as the Poor Law Com-